



## **2021 - 2022 Cross Health & Safety Guidelines**

**Updated: September 23, 2021**

### **Introduction**

The 2020-2021 school year undoubtedly challenged our resolve and preparation as an organization. By God's grace, we were able to complete our year by offering an in-person learning option to every student, every day, all day. We also made learning accommodations for those families that felt either hybrid learning or full e-learning was in the best interest of their family's health and safety. Our teachers worked tirelessly to plan flexible instruction that stretched their comfort zone daily and supported our students to strive for rigorous academic goals even during a pandemic. Cross Lutheran School finished our school year with no full-school closures, no extended periods of quarantine for entire classrooms, and no documented cases of COVID-19 spread/outbreak within our building.

WE, and I highlight WE intentionally, all had an important role in last year's success! As parents & guardians, you actively participated in dialog during the summer planning months, unified around the common goal of having our Crusaders in-person at all costs, and honestly communicated with the school office regarding student illness and/or potential COVID-19 exposure within your home.

As we look to the upcoming 2021-22 school year, we will once again depend on everyone to actively participate in the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. At an organizational level, we feel confident that with local vaccination rates high in Kendall County, low positivity/transmission rates, sick/symptomatic students remaining at home, and COVID testing being consistently utilized as part of our return to school procedure, we can yet again remain open for in-person instruction all year long and bring back many of the components to our educational program that we needed to pause last year.

While our staff will be prepared in the event of a classroom quarantine, families will not be able to choose hybrid learning or e-learning as a primary learning modality. Virtual learning will be made available to students if they are at home following COVID-19 quarantine protocols. There are more details on this within the guidelines below.

The following is the most current outline of Cross Lutheran School's proposal to remain safely open for the 2021-22 school year. We pray that our families will continue to be mindful that COVID-19 exists, is still contagious, and impacts those unvaccinated/without immunity in similar ways as it has over the past 6 months. Our approach to opening in-person education at Cross for the fall must remain flexible and adaptable. We will make adjustments as community circumstances and additional information dictate.

We continue to pray for additional patience, grace, and adaptability from our staff and school families. Ultimately, the safety of our staff and your children is top priority for our administrative team. With that being said, here are our Health & Safety Guidelines as it stands now.

### **Illness Reporting (PS - 8th)**

- Accurately reporting student illness to the school office will once again be essential in our collaborative effort to keep our school staff and students as safe and healthy as possible.
- **ALL SICK AND SYMPTOMATIC CHILDREN MUST REMAIN HOME AND FOLLOW THE SICK STUDENT GUIDELINES BELOW IN ORDER TO RETURN TO SCHOOL.**
- **Non-Symptomatic siblings may attend school unless COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed.**
- Parents need to communicate with the school office immediately if their student has COVID-19 symptoms, tests positive for COVID-19 or has been in close contact with someone that has been experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
  - These students need to follow the current guidelines of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) regarding when it is safe to return to school.
  - Cross will work alongside the Kendall County Health Department (KCHD) to determine the necessary level of communication regarding positive COVID cases.
  - KCHD has hired many Contact Tracing staff and has indicated they will be more actively involved in this process.
- **Sick Student Return to School Guidelines ([See Updated Return to School Flow Chart Here](#))**
  - If he/she has the following (**List A**) symptoms: Fever 100.4 or great, loss of taste/smell, sore throat, body aches, chills
    - Require negative COVID test or alternative diagnosis from medical care provider
    - Vaccinated persons (or those with current antibody test on file) - May return after 24 hours symptom free without a COVID test.
    - If the COVID test is positive, KCHD guidelines will determine the Return to School procedure.
  - If he/she has the following (**List B**) symptoms and is not a known Close Contact: cough, headache, runny nose, congestion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
    - Require minimum of 24 hours of being symptom free before returning to school

- If these symptoms are in combination with List A symptoms above or develop after being designated as a Close Contact of COVID-19, additional medical clearance will be required along with quarantine.
- **Student Tests Positive for COVID-19**
  - Student remains home for 10 days after positive test result/symptom onset

AND

  - Student has been symptom free for 24 hours then he/she may return to school
- **Close Contact**
  - **If both the infected individual and the Close Contact are consistently masked, the Close Contact does not need to quarantine. (IDPH guideline)**
  - **If the Close Contact is vaccinated, he/she does not need to quarantine unless symptoms develop.**
  - A close contact is defined as being an UNVACCINATED individual within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection).
  - [Our Path to Return to School Guidelines](#) lay out the different Close Contact Quarantine Options that have been developed for schools that are in compliance with the Governor's executive order on 8/4/21.
- **Classroom Cases**
  - We will communicate with families when there is a positive case in their child's classroom. If multiple positive cases develop in a given classroom/cohort, additional mitigation steps will be taken.
  - We will **not** notify the entire school for every case. Instead we will notify only those classes that are impacted unless it becomes necessary to do so.
  - It will be up to the parents in these classrooms to closely monitor their own children for new symptoms and communicate with the school ASAP.
- **Vaccination Status/Antibody Test Results**
  - If students have been vaccinated, parents should provide the official documentation to the school office along with all other required medical information. If this documentation is on file, your student will be eligible for the close contact exemption, if applicable, mentioned above.
  - **Antibody Test Results**
    - Unvaccinated persons who have tested antibody positive within 3 months before or immediately following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, and who have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure do not need to quarantine, provided there is limited or no contact with persons at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness.

## **Overall Safety Measures (Preventative) Inside the Classroom**

- Keeping ALL sick/symptomatic students (any illness) at home is our best and most effective mitigation step.
- Neglecting this policy will not be tolerated.
- All Return to School Guidelines will be strictly adhered to.
  
- **Face Covering Requirements (PS - 8th) (Updated 8/13/21)**
  - Face masks are currently mandated indoors for all staff and students per the governor's executive order on 8/4/21. Cross will honor this mask mandate for the present time.
  - Students/Staff will not be required to wear face masks when:
    - They are working independently and physically distanced or protected by a safety partition.
    - They are outdoors
    - They are eating a snack, lunch, or having a drink.
  - Students will be required to come to school each day with two or more cloth and/or surgical masks for their usage. These masks should be made of:
    - Two or more layers of solid fabric.
    - Masks with vented valves are not permitted.
  - Return to School Guidelines are impacted by the decision to wear face coverings.
  - We reserve the right to require masks in a classroom, cohort or for the whole school if we feel it's in the best interest of our students and faculty (i.e. community or school case rates begin to climb). We will remain in communication with our families regarding these decisions.
  - **Medical Mask Exemptions**
    - Any family, in consultation with their primary care physician, seeking to qualify for a medical mask exemption, must do so within the terms and conditions provided by the state in this linked memo. ([Medical Mask Exemptions](#))
- **Plexiglas Partitions & Physical Distancing**
  - For the most part, plexiglas partitions will not be utilized between students on communal learning tables.
    - If we needed to reimplement these as part of a mitigation plan, we reserve the right to do so.
  - Students will be encouraged to remain physically distant unless actively working together. Current IDPH recommendations call for at least 3 feet of distance between students if at all possible.
- **Cleaning & Hygiene**
  - All high-touch surfaces will be regularly disinfected throughout the school daily by adults, not students, using the protocols of the CDC and IDPH as the bare minimum standard.
  - Proper handwashing techniques will continue to be highlighted to all students.

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be made widely available in classrooms and other areas of the building.
- **Windows & Doors Open**
  - When seasonally appropriate, classroom and other common area windows will be opened.
- **Portable Air Purifiers**
  - Classrooms with larger student enrollments will be equipped with portable air purifiers with True HEPA filtration and UV disinfection.
- **Water Bottles (PS - 8th)**
  - Every Cross student will be required to have a labeled refillable water bottle with them at school everyday. Please send the bottle in full to begin the day. Drinking from the water fountains will be discouraged on a regular basis; however, filling water bottles at the fountains will be encouraged. Our younger students will receive adult help in filling bottles when necessary.
- **Electronic Devices**
  - As of the 2020-21 school year, each Cross student has access to an electronic device that is specifically designated to them for the year.
  - Devices will be available for K - 4th grade students to take home and use for school during a period of quarantine due to COVID-19.

### **Lunchtime (K-8th)**

- Classes will be divided into three lunch periods, and students will eat in the fellowship hall/food court.
- There will be a designated nut/tree nut free table in the fellowship hall.
- Teachers will be encouraged to eat lunch outside, weather permitting, as a class, picnic-style in different locations across our campus. Students may consider bringing a beach towel that they could sit on during outside lunch.
- Teachers will also be intentional about spacing students out at lunchtime, especially indoors, as best as possible.

### **Chapel/Worship**

- Cross will plan to hold our weekly school worship outdoors when seasonally appropriate and the weather cooperates.
- When worship is indoors, we will have two separate services: 1st - 8th grade and Kindergarten & Preschool
  - We reserve the right to adjust indoors worship protocols to ensure student safety during times of higher community transmission and/or positive COVID cases at Cross.

## **Student/Staff Shows Symptoms During the Day**

- If a student were to show COVID-like symptoms during the school day, the classroom teacher would monitor these symptoms to determine their progression/persistence over a window of time (approx. 20-30 minutes). If the symptoms do not improve or they become worse, the student would be immediately removed from their class by a Cross staff member and brought down to the office area in order to be picked up by a parent/guardian.
  - The sick/symptomatic student(s) will be provided a surgical mask and will need to wear it while waiting to be picked up.
  - Siblings may remain in school unless they are a close contact of a household COVID-19 case or are symptomatic themselves.
- The parents/guardians will be contacted to come and pick up their student ASAP from school. If the primary contacts are unavailable, the listed emergency contact will be contacted.
- We understand that leaving work/changing one's schedule on short notice can be very challenging and stressful; however, we do need to emphasize the importance of students with COVID-like symptoms or any other illness symptoms to be removed from the building.
- Areas that may have been used by either a sick student or staff member will be closed off and properly cleaned and disinfected per CDC guidance. These areas may be reopened once the appropriate disinfecting steps have been completed.
  - We will handle each situation as consistently as possible with the understanding that, depending on the circumstances, Cross' actions may vary somewhat in each instance.

## **E-Learning Plans: '21-22 School Year**

- Each grade-level/team has developed an age-appropriate E-learning schedule for the scenario of a class-wide/school-wide mandate to learn virtually.

## **Building Visitors**

- Cross looks forward to welcoming back parental volunteers into our plans for the upcoming school year, when necessary/appropriate.
- All visitors will be held to the same health and safety standards implemented for our staff and students.
  - This includes, but is not limited to, face coverings and proper hand hygiene.
  - Visitors will not be permitted into the building if they have been a recent close contact of a COVID-19 case or if they are symptomatic/sick.
- At this time, any parent volunteers/visitors that will be working with students will need to be masked during indoor activities.

- **AM Drop Off**

- In order to limit the number of individuals in the hallways and classrooms, parents will not be permitted to walk students into the building again this year. Our preschool 2s students are the one exception to this rule. Our Cross teachers and teacher aides will be present in the hallways and outside of classrooms to help our youngest Crusaders find their way safely to class in the morning. We understand this is a component of our Cross community that our parents miss dearly. Cross administration is planning intentional ways to support the re-engagement and reconnection of parents/guardians safely during the '21-22 school year.

### **Field Trips (PS - 8th)**

- Cross staff has been given permission to once again schedule field trips and learning experiences outside the classroom that enhance our students' learning experience.
- Our staff and students will adhere to the health and safety guidelines (including masking) enacted at any location in which we choose to visit.
- Field trips will be canceled/rescheduled if COVID rates necessitate.

### **Cross Cares (PS - 8th)**

- Cross Cares will implement the school-wide health and safety guidelines as is applicable.

### **Athletics**

- Bitty Athletics (PS - 4th grade)
  - Will be reimplemented as a Cross extracurricular offering for our younger students
  - Sport specific guidance will most likely follow the guidelines supplied for youth and high school athletics, in general.
- Interscholastic Athletics (5th - 8th grade)
  - Cross will closely follow and adhere to the guidance of
  - the IESA (Illinois Elementary School Association) regarding competitive sports. All Cross Health and Safety Guidelines implemented during the school day are also applicable for our athletic programs.

### **Music Courses: Choir & Band**

- Cross plans to offer students choir and band opportunities during the school day and, at times, after school.

- Choir - We plan to have students participating in choir again this school year. To begin the year, we will start with our oldest students and prepare to sing for worship services either prerecorded or live during Sunday service. We will work closely with the church staff to determine an appropriate schedule and communicate this with our families in a timely fashion.
- Band - Music Education Services will return to in-person lessons for their students this school year.
  - Organizationally, they are updating their health and safety measures and will share these measures with the schools and their participants when ready.

### **Family Travel**

- Families should remain vigilant and mindful of their travel plans and possible exposure through travel.
- At this time, we will not be requiring students to quarantine after travel.
- Once again, we do encourage you to travel responsibly paying extra attention to the guidance from the CDC.
- Virtual learning will not be made available for students that miss school due to travel.

We are excited about and looking forward to the '21-22 school year. We feel that with God's hedge of continued protection, the help of parents in keeping sick students home, and informed and flexible organizational leadership, Cross will be able to keep your students safe while providing them an amazing Christ-centered, loving education.

Be blessed,

Mr. Goffron